

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Rep. Miller: Biodiesel Bills Die in Committee, but Fight to Pass Them Not Over**



#### *Will Offer Them In House Sessions In Next Few Weeks*

With bipartisan support increasing for measures to encourage the use of biodiesel as an environmentally friendly alternative fuel in Connecticut, state Representative Lawrence G. Miller, R-122<sup>nd</sup> District, today vowed to offer at least two measures that died in committee as amendments on the House floor before the General

Assembly's May 3<sup>rd</sup> statutory adjournment date.

"Although one of the five bills introduced this year to encourage the use of biodiesel fuel is still alive and would be beneficial if enacted into law, it would not significantly improve overall air quality in Connecticut as quickly as the four bills that died in committee," said Representative Miller. "A total of 35 legislators, both Republican and Democrat, signed onto two of the bills as original introducers, which indicates that there is significant bipartisan support for pro-biodiesel legislation this year. That is why I intend to offer at least two – if not all – of the measures that failed in the Environment and Energy and Technology committees as amendments on the floor of the House within the next few weeks."

All four of the measures that died in the committees would have provided tax incentives to encourage wider use of biodiesel, Representative Miller said.

"Connecticut's air quality is one of the worst in the country. Fairfield County has been designated a 'severe non-attainment' area under the federal Clean Air Act while the rest of the state is classified as a 'serious non-attainment' area under the same standards. In addition, Connecticut has the 9<sup>th</sup> highest incidence of cancer nationwide and the highest incidence of asthma in New England – and cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in our state," Representative Miller said.

"Environment and Human Health Inc. of North Haven has documented the correlation between auto and truck emissions and respiratory health problems. Widespread use of biodiesel would improve air quality by reducing particulate matter, and lowering cancer-causing toxins in diesel fuel by 80 to 90 percent, which in turn would significantly reduce the incidence of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases in Connecticut," Representative Miller said.

"Despite the obvious improvement to air quality and public health that would result from wider use of biodiesel, the bureaucrats at the state Department of Environmental Protection (environmental procrastination would more accurately describe them) continue to obstruct efforts to promote the use of biodiesel. They object to biodiesel because it is not 100 percent effective since it does not significantly reduce nitrate oxide emissions. That is a concern that is not shared by environmentally-conscious Europeans, who consume close to three-quarters of a billion gallons of biodiesel annually, compared to only about 75 million gallons per year in the United States," Representative Miller said.

"Biodiesel is an environmentally-friendly alternative fuel as well as a renewable fuel. It meets all the requirements set forth in the federal Clean Air Act and has been tested more than any other alternative fuel. Unlike the expensive air filters many environmental groups want installed on all diesel powered

vehicles (the cost to install them on the state's diesel fleet alone would be about \$15 million), biodiesel can be substituted for conventional diesel with only minor adjustments to vehicle engines. Even the newer diesel engines, which burn fuel more efficiently and are favored by many environmental groups, are far from perfect. The fumes emitted by those engines contain very fine particulate matter that is especially harmful to children's lungs and can cause serious respiratory health problems," Representative Miller said.

"If you drive south on I-95 in Stratford, just as you cross into Bridgeport, you will see a billboard sign that promotes the use of biodiesel and says: 'Yes to clean air.' The sign says it all. It is time for the state legislature to act on measures that will encourage more people to use biodiesel and improve air quality in our state. If biodiesel use increases dramatically in a single year, it could save \$20 million in health care costs during the first year and \$10 million annually thereafter. My legislative colleagues can help make that happen by supporting my biodiesel proposals when I offer them on the floor later this month," Representative Miller said.